

## THE ARGUS

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TUESDAY, OCTOBER 28, 1919.

Employers throughout Spain have declared a general lockout. Spain is still in the dark ages, industrially speaking.

Nearly five millions of the sons of Italy were either killed, wounded, taken prisoner or sent to hospitals seriously ill during the war. That is a dear price to pay if the only gain the country will reap were represented in the small territorial additions agreed upon.

Excess of exports over imports in September was \$155,000,000, which is less than the difference in any month since July, 1917. The rest of the world is gradually coming to trade with us on more even terms. Not until the balance runs the other way will it have started to repay what we have loaned it.

Senator Poindexter launches his campaign for the presidency on a platform which for the most part is commonplace. Americanism, economy in government, justice for all—those are trite planks, though not harmless. But when he declares for stripping the peace treaty of the "extraneous incumbrances" which bind this nation to perform some definite service as a member of the League of Nations in return for the benefits that it has every reason to hope to share—then he takes a position that the people will not approve of and he thereby eliminates himself as a presidential possibility.

The president yesterday vetoed the act which had passed congress prohibiting intoxicating beverages, and regulating the manufacture, production, use and sale of high proof spirits, etc., holding that the law as originally passed, and the emergencies and exigencies of war having passed, and the object of the prohibition enactment having been satisfied in the demobilization of the army and navy, there could be no reason why it should be effective pending the inauguration of the constitutional prohibition the first of the year. The house of representatives, however, repassed the measure over the president's veto, so there is to be no oasis in the dry desert.

## W. R. Moore's Chances.

Democrats of the Thirty-third senatorial district have a good chance to elect their candidate for member of the state constitutional convention, W. R. Moore of Moline. Dissensions in the Republican party which have resulted from the independent candidacy of C. J. Searle of this city probably will split the support of the majority party in the district three ways and give the minority a chance to secure representation. This, after all, is a desirable outcome, since it will better serve the interests of all the people.

W. R. Moore is an able lawyer, a conscientious one and not affiliated with corporate or other interests in a way to impair his usefulness. In length of service in the district he outranks any of the other nominees.

If the Democrats stick together in this fight they should win representation in the convention. The object surely is worth a little extra effort.

## Striking at Will.

It is evident that a precedent is needed to modify the belief that workers have a right to strike anywhere, at any time, under any circumstances. This government was founded upon the theory that the rights of the majority

take precedence over the rights of the minority and it always has been held that a minority which refused to abide by the verdict of the majority was guilty of poor sportsmanship. The right of workers to strike in cases where only they themselves and their employers are directly affected is conceded and of course no man can be compelled to work against his will so long as he is a free citizen. If, however, he is engaged in an enterprise upon which the public absolutely depends for that which sustains life or protects people and property the obligation is upon him to refrain from entering in or carrying out any agreement looking to a complete suspension of operations.

Unless all signs fail it is going to be definitely decided soon just which workers have a right to strike at will and which have not.

## For Water Transportation.

Practical plans for the development of internal waterways of the country are taking form at the hands of the National Rivers and Harbors congress. Copies of amendments to the Cummins railroad bill recently presented to the senate are being circulated all over the country in order to get helpful suggestions, and the entire project will be revised at the coming annual meeting in Washington, Dec. 9 to 11. Then in its final form it will be placed before congress and the fight for its enactment will begin.

Tentative amendments have been in the making since the last annual meeting. Then a special committee on transportation legislation was authorized and finally was organized with 110 members, representing 32 states. Last month a sub-committee of 17 met and framed the provisions which were placed before the senate as proposed changes in the Cummins bill.

The first of these transfers to the shipping board all the rights in reference to canals now exercised by the director general of railroads under the federal control act, but authorizes the relinquishment of control over the canals of New York upon request of the governor. It also directs the shipping board to carry out all contracts made by the railroad administration for the building of boats and barges and to continue for five years the operation of the government transportation lines now established upon our inland waterways and "such additional lines as it may find desirable to establish."

The second section prevents railroads from reducing rates to meet water competition except by permission of the interstate commerce commission, and when rates are so reduced, prohibits the maintenance of any higher rates to intermediate points.

Existing law gives the commission authority to order connection made between the tracks of a rail carrier and the docks of a water carrier and to establish through routes and joint, or proportion, rates between and over such rail and water lines. Section 2 specifically directs the commission to do these things and also authorizes the establishment of maximum, or minimum, or maximum and minimum joint rates.

Section 4 authorizes the commission, upon application, to establish through routes and joint, or proportional, rates between connecting lines of water carriers. Section 5 provides that the absorption by a water carrier of the switching, terminal, or other charge of a rail carrier, shall not subject the water carrier to the provisions of the interstate commerce act. Section 6 provides that the commission shall have no jurisdiction over "port-to-port rates by water, except insofar as may be necessary in effecting interchange of traffic."

Section 7 gives to the department of commerce a long list of duties "with the object of promoting, encouraging and developing water transportation facilities in connection with the commerce of the United States." Among these are the investigation of boats and terminals; cooperation with communities in the preparation of plans for terminals and in securing light and proportional rates by water and rail; and, compiling and publishing of statistics and information concerning water transportation.

This comprises the most carefully thought out program yet placed before the country for legislation to restore water transportation to the place most people believe it is rightly entitled to. That it is not yet complete and changes are contemplated is admitted.

Rock Island, and every other city on a navigable stream is interested and ought to be represented in the meeting at Washington when the amendments take final form.

## A BAD YEAR FOR RATS.

BY FREDERIC J. HASKIN.

(Special Correspondent of The Argus).

Washington, D. C., Oct. 26.—During the past few months thousands of rats have died in a nation-wide organized warfare against them, and thousands more of them are doomed to die, as the warfare spreads from city to city. It is estimated that between thirty and forty American towns and cities have conducted campaigns against the rats, or are now conducting them.

The extermination of the rat is one of the most important problems the country faces, and the rat is the hardest animal on earth to exterminate. He is hardy, shrewd and above all, prolific. Rats breed six or eight times a year and begin their conjugal life at the age of about three months. Eight to ten young rats are born in each litter. Some statisticians at the biological survey has figures out that at this rate one pair of rats in three years would have established a family containing 359,709,432 individuals. If you don't believe this, work out the arithmetic for yourself.

This rat campaign was started by the biological survey and is under the special generalship of Dr. Bell and Dr. Fisher of that bureau. These are the men who cleared all the prairie dogs out of several western states, often leaving whole counties literally without a prairie dog. Dr. Bell says he "went out and lived with the prairie dogs" until he had evolved a dead sure method of killing them, and then he put that method into operation on a large scale and thoroughly organized all he had intended to do the same thing with rats. It would not be possible to exterminate the rats as completely and cleanly as the prairie dogs and ground squirrels were exterminated, but it would be possible to save the country millions of dollars and to reduce the danger from several facts.

The first thing was to find a method of killing rats that was thoroughly practicable. The survey found such a method in systematic poisoning with barium carbonate. It wrote a bulletin about it, and instigated several campaigns, but because of lack of funds, the survey had not intended to launch its main assault on the rats until next year.

Meantime, various commercial concerns and city governments seem almost to have taken the rat-killing business out of the hands of the government. Not only have all the manufacturers of rat poisons and rat traps in the United States suddenly taken a new lease of life, and on advertising spaces, but in addition, several concerns have been organized for the sole purpose of exploiting the new rat poison which has been made popular by the government—barium carbonate. The biological survey now appears to be somewhat embarrassed, therefore, by the fact that whenever it hosts barium carbonate, it is boosting the business of sundry shrewd commercial operators. Nevertheless the survey cannot very well desert its pet poison, nor give up its well-laid plans for a grand rat-war next year. Accordingly, it has adopted a successful method of working with the private operators, and exercising a sort of informal government supervision over them.

The real king of these rat killers is a middle-aged traveling salesman who happened to pick up a copy of the government bulletin explaining how rats could be killed with barium carbonate, and who instantly saw the great commercial possibilities of that government endorsement. He forthwith went into the market and bought barium carbonate at a price of about \$60 a ton, and had it put up in two-ounce packages which were to be sold at 25 cents each. The thing was the top of poison, which cost him \$50 would retail at a gross price of \$4,000. Of course the cost of packing and selling had to come out of that, but it is easy to see that this rat-killer was allowing himself a reasonable margin of profit.

Having prepared his poison, he now went out and lived with the rats, until he knew all of their little dietetic preferences and other personal peculiarities, and had his poisoning method down fine. He then organized a rat exterminating company, with salesmen and assistants, and tackled a large and important southern port city.

He broadcasted this city with government literature about the frightful ravages of rats and about the barium carbonate method of killing them. He did not say that he represented the government, and doubtless did not intend to produce that impression, but nonetheless he was a rat-killer, and he got the newspapers on his side and the mayor and the city government. He is a wonderful talker. He made these gentlemen see that their great duty to their city, their nation and their God was to exterminate rats. And he further made it clear that he was the boy who could kill rats. In order to demonstrate this latter fact, he offered to clean the rats out of the municipal wharves and markets at no expense to the city, furnishing his own poison. No one could criticize a proposition like that. And he did it. He put out his poison in the night, and the next morning he hired boys to gather up dead rats, and rats were brought forth by the barrelful. The city officials were impressed and grateful. And it didn't cost them a cent. But all the time, salesmen were selling that barium carbonate at the city at 25 cents a box, so that this modern plan did not go without his reward. He is said to have remarked that he would like to take a job in the cabinet, but that he couldn't afford to do so.

He was wild-eyed and excited, waiting for him. He was amazed when the little man drew out of his pocket a number of paper bands each marked five thousand dollars and each bearing the initials of the teller, who had been robbed. It appeared that the little man had been in the room behind his little rat story, to two men, had found the bands in their waste basket, and, familiar with the bands from having drawn money several times, his suspicions were aroused. Very quietly Clyde left the bank with the bands, and accompanied by two of the special detectives of the institution, and within an hour all except a trifle of the \$20,000 was recovered.

The bank fairly overwhelmed Clyde by presenting him with a thousand dollars. As to Clyde, the vice president learned of his love for Naomi Russell and their mutual friend of rich and poor alike acquired a royal reward.

The New England Women's Life Underwriters' association, with 50 members, is the only organization of women life underwriters in America.

Photography can prove the presence of skin eruptions which are entirely invisible to the naked eye.

The next morning when Clyde reached the bank he found the

HEALTH TALKS  
BY WILLIAM BRADY M.D.  
NOTED PHYSICIAN AND AUTHOR

## Nervous Breakdown So-Called (2)

If I were to meet a hard working fellow at a dark corner and invite him into one of those so-called ice cream joints and lead him to a table and say "Have a chair" and let him have it right over the ear and fracture his skull and paralyze the poor fellow, it would be fair enough to say he had suffered a nervous breakdown. Just as fair as the customary use of that term, and not one whit more ridiculous.

Apoplexy stroke of paralysis, cerebral hemorrhage, no more a nervous breakdown or a nervous disease or a menace to "nervous" persons than is bunion. Apoplexy is rather a cardiovascular disease, an arterial disease, a disease of individuals who think hygiene is mere piffle and longevity and personal health mostly luck. Apoplexy is a disease of people who are ignorant from the neck down.

"Nervous breakdown" is a favorite outwitting of the physician in attendance on the distinguished patient whose person ill health excites the curiosity of the public. The more ignorant the individual (from the neck up) the more pleasure he derives from parading his personal ill health before the public gaze. Intelligent people, on the other hand, shirk the publicity of notoriety, and their physicians, as a rule, protect them by giving out whatever little fabrications exigencies suggest. This is perfectly proper.

For the past 40 years cardiovascular disease (heart, arteries, kidneys, including Bright's disease and apoplexy) has been apparently increasing in prevalence while other important diseases have steadily decreased, according to mortality tables from census records and 25 parts of alcohol. If five parts of Canada turpentine and three parts of castor oil are dissolved in 92 parts of cod liver oil, the product is a flexible cod liver oil. It is a very good, cleanly and inconspicuous protective dressing for small lesions, being impervious to moisture. Just before applying it swab the spot with iodine. Cod liver oil must be kept in a tightly corked or glass stoppered vial, lest the ether evaporate and leave the liquid thick and hard.

Answers—It is cod liver oil, made by dissolving four parts of pyroxilin (gun-cotton) in 75 parts of ether and 25 parts of alcohol. If five parts of Canada turpentine and three parts of castor oil are dissolved in 92 parts of cod liver oil, the product is a flexible cod liver oil. It is a very good, cleanly and inconspicuous protective dressing for small lesions, being impervious to moisture. Just before applying it swab the spot with iodine. Cod liver oil must be kept in a tightly corked or glass stoppered vial, lest the ether evaporate and leave the liquid thick and hard.

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